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## Women's Issues folder, 1978 (League of Women Voters Records box 68, folder 17)

Maine League of Women Voters Staff  
*Maine League of Women Voters*

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## WOMEN'S ISSUES

Dec. 12, 1978      Evening Unit

Issues discussed:      \*of most interest

- \*benefits for part-time workers  
  equal pay
- \*job re-entry/displaced homemakers
- \*battered spouses  
  legal rights of the single woman and others  
  role stereotyping
- \*child care  
  ERA (state level)  
  reproductive freedom/abortion  
  sexual preference  
  age discrimination

Minutes Women's Issues Committee Meeting  
July 13, 1983

- I. Goals of committee
  - A. Education
    - 1. Membership
    - 2. General Public
  - B. Action - Lobbying
  - C. Voter updates on current issues
- II. Implementation of goals
  - A. Use of guest speakers at committee meetings to increase understanding and knowledge of committee members concerning women's issues - particularly information about the Women's Equity Act, employment for women, ERA, Human Services Programs and how they effect women
    - 1. legislative leaders - Nancy Masterson, Pat Stevens, Nancy Clark, etc.
    - 2. congressional representatives or staff persons
    - 3. women's group leaders -- Jeanie McGowan, NOW representative, NARAL, BPW
    - 4. Human Services issue - Michael Petit
  - B. Establish possible speakers bureau of league people to speak to other groups in own community or to present skits to educate public towards passage of ERA referendum
  - C. Work toward putting together a pamphlet for ERA referendum
- III. Resources to use -- keeping a running bibliography
  - A. National Voter - Spring '83 -- Women and Work
  - B. National Voter - Winter '83 -- Women in Poverty, Losing the War
  - C. Inform - a quarterly Newsletter for Maine Women published by the Maine Commission for Women  
State House Station 93  
Augusta, Me. 04333 *free on request*
  - D. Women and Work  
League of Women Voters Education Fund - Pub. #116 - 20¢  
LWVUS  
1730 M street, NW, Washington D. C. 20036

E. National Women Education Fund

1410 Q Street

Washington D. C. 20009

F. Update -- Congressional Causus for Women's Issues

Co Chair Hon. Patricia Schroeder and

Olympia Snowe

2471 Rayburn House Office Bldg.

Washington D. C. 20515

(free on request)

G. Coalition on Women and the Budget

The Grassroots Task Force

~~W~~ Wider Opportunities for Women

1325 G Street NW, Lower Level

Washington D. C. 20005

(20¢ stamp required)

IV. Agenda for September 14 meeting to include guest speakers  
from state legislature.

done

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for Jan. Voter

WOMEN'S ISSUES--~~REPORT~~ TO THE BOARD

Two lively meetings were held on November 12 with Rachel Smith leader and Joanne Fritsche<sup>as</sup> resource person.

Issues under discussion included legal rights of women; the battered woman and the abused child; discrimination against women at work, especially at promotion time; discrimination in education, both on the student level and the faculty; discrimination, the poor woman seeking an abortion; problems of the displaced homemaker; the need for recognition of the value of the contribution made by the homemaker to her family and to the nation; and support of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Little precise knowledge of the legal rights of women in Maine seemed a handicap in thinking of what direction the League might go or what effective contribution it could make. In view of this lack, it was agreed that there should be further study, possibly at another meeting or in a workshop. Such a study could take place after bills affecting women had been filed in the legislature and we knew what other women's groups (the Women's Lobby, for instance) were doing. It was felt that cooperation with others would increase our effectiveness. Materials for study could be circulated previous to the study meeting.

Helen Callan agreed to work with me as co-chairman for any future work the League might choose to do. My thanks to all who participated in the <sup>December</sup> ~~November~~ meetings and especially to Helen for her willingness to serve.

Velma K. Oliver — ~~for~~ Women's ISSUES

~~For Women's Issues~~

Women's Issues

(cont. of)

(continued)

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ORONO, OLD TOWN, AND VEAZIE

General meeting dealing with Women's Issues - February 28, 1979 - 7:30 P.M.

Meeting Format:

- Opening of meeting - Alma Otto, President

- Introduction of Panelists and Moderator

Panel: Kathryn Godwin - Maine Commission for Women

Topic  
Me. Comm. for Women

Ellen Weissman - Coordinator/Office of Women's  
Programs & Services/UMO

Displaced Homemakers

Martha Mitchell - Public Education Consultant  
Spruce Run

Domestic Violence

JoAnn Fritsche - Director/Equal Employment  
Opportunity/UMO

General areas  
of concern

Moderator: Ted Curtis - Former Legislator, Attorney

- Overview of meeting format - Ted Curtis

- Opening statements of 8-10 minutes by each panelist

- Questions and discussion

- Suggestions for future League action

- Concluding statements of panel and moderator

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WOMEN'S ISSUES

Two meetings dealing with Women's Issues were held this year. While no action steps for future league involvement on these issues was decided at these meetings, a great deal of information and discussion was generated.

The first meeting in December raised a long list of issues dealing with women that are current and in some cases controversial. The subject matter ranged from battered wives and displaced homemakers to the status of ERA and our own Maine Commission for Women.

Recognizing a need for more precise information another meeting was planned and held in February. At which time, Kay Godwin, representing the Maine Commission for Women; Ellen Weissman, coordinator of Women's Programs/UMO; and Martha Mitchell, Public Education Consultant from Spruce Run were the panel of resource persons. They provided background and current information on the specific areas of domestic violence, the displaced homemaker and the Maine Commission of Women. These subjects were considered to be the most prominent and with most support among the bills affecting women that were introduced to the legislature this session.

Helen Callan  
Women's Issues Co-Chairman

November 12, 1978: Women's Issues

The forenoon meeting was held at Pam O'Leary's. Present were Rachel Smith, Luana White, Madeleine Freeman, Ruth Davis, Joan VanRheenan, Mary Snyder, Cleo Oliver, Velma Oliver, Kathy Sewall, Jo Ann Fritsche, and Pam O'Leary. Rachel Smith was leader and Jo Ann Fritsche was resource person.

Question: What are the issues facing women in Maine?

The following concerns were listed:

1. Legal rights
  - a. Property rights
  - b. Getting credit
  - c. freedom of reproductive choice
  - d. inheritance laws
  - e. homemaker status
2. E R A
3. Discrimination in the professions
  - a. Education
  - b. Government
  - c. Business
4. Needs and problems of
  - a. battered wife and abused child
  - b. displaced homemaker---by divorce or death

Legal rights brought forth the greatest amount of discussion.

Questions included:

- a. What about property when the husband dies? Exactly how does the law read?
- b. What if a woman shares the work in a business? Is it necessary for a legal partnership to be formed?
- c. What about people living together but not married?
- d. Where do women stand as far as human rights are concerned?
- e. What about the law as to abortion? To rich only?
- f. What information is available re contraceptions?
- g. How can a woman cope with abuse of herself? Of her child?

Comments:

More young women are now choosing to become homemakers.

Working women should have training in ways to enable them to get ahead.

Women should help each other out, especially the older women



## Women' Issues 2

should help the younger. There should be developed an 'old girl' concept.

More women should get into politics.

Single women can get credit easier than a married woman.

Provable legislative causes will be the battered woman and the displaced homemaker.

It was agreed that not enough was known about the legal rights of women already on the law books of Maine or about how to enforce the laws on the books.. It was suggested that a meeting be arranged with a lawyer present.

Evening meeting at Rejesh Puri's. Present: Kay Woodwin, Helen Callan, Nancy Schuman, Rachel Smith, Jo Ann Fritsche, Lois McDaniel, Alma Otto, Velma Oliver Dee Fearon, and Gail Ryan. Rachel Smith was leader with Jo Ann Fritsche again the resource person.

Rachel asked what were the important women's issues. Responses follow.

1. Benefits for the part time worker.
2. Job-re-entry---the displaced homemaker.
3. The battered woman
4. Legal rights of women who had lost husbands as to
  - a. children
  - b. credit
  - c. property
5. Equal pay for equal work.
6. Difficulty in getting jobs usually considered for men only.
7. Child care while mother works.
8. ERM. Maine laws regarding equal rights good/ enforcement? Judy Potter and Gail Marshall, under sponsorship of the Maine Commission for Women, have published a compilation in simple terms.
9. Sexual preference in life styles----couples without marriage, gay rights
10. Reproductive freedom (abortion if necessary) and family planning.

11.U.S. Title LX--making it mandatory that women not be discriminated against but that special effort be made to assure them equal opportunity in institutions receiving federal money. This applies especially in athletic opportunities.

12. Part time jobs- job sharing.

The question: Which of these does the League have a chance to be effective:

1. Part time jobs.
2. Battered spouses.
3. Social Security for the homemaker
4. Exerting pressure on the governor to appoint women.
5. Day care centers---a question here of feasibility, costs and strict regulations.

It was pointed that the League had no position regarding abortion per se but it is opposed to penalizing the poor woman which withholding medicaid funds does.

This group also felt that another meeting was need to get more information and to know what bills may need our support during the next legislative session.

*Deana K. Oliver*  
*Human Resources*

WOMEN'S ISSUES  
LWV Meeting - April 7, 1981

Pat Arnold (Displaced Homemakers) - meaning of the term "displaced" is an individual who has spent years doing home work for family--through death, etc., loses income--does not have training to obtain job. It's a time when women are put in a bind. The experience they've gained doesn't fit into the job market. Displaced Homemakers Act provided for training for such women. Counseling to help one cope with the emotional process and the decision making that has to be done at such a time is a part of the Act also.

No program exists in this area. CETA was doing some of these things but, of course, is being cut.

Madeleine Freeman (Social Security and Pension Plans) - Some statistics: women represent 51% of American population; 2/3 of older people are women; 1/2 of all women are working.

Average social security for women is less than for men.

A lot of women are not included in pension plans.

Linda Lerner (Day Care Needs) - The Federal Government has not made a policy on the connection of employment and day care. There is not a thought out policy for Day Care. Some regulations have been proposed but will never be put into practice because it is too expensive.

This administration seems to be leaning toward a tax credit plan whereby low income families will be provided daycare subsidy by giving tax credit. People should have readily available to them day care on a sliding scale.

There is a bill in Maine legislature "AN ACT to aid businesses with tax credits if they provide day care for employees"

Beth Osler (Women in the Job Market) -

- Higher management-type jobs are not as great for women
- Women are paid less
- Women are not advancing because they have not traditionally been seeking
- Women have in the past lacked technical knowledge
- Men have an unconscious desire to protect women
- What can women do about the obstacles they encounter?-- stay in and keep plugging!
- Some alternatives for women: sharing of jobs, flexible hours,
- Networking